



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Eastern States Office
7450 Boston Boulevard, Springfield, Virginia 22153

PRESS RELEASE

For Release: Immediately

Contact: Joy Pasquariello
(703) 440-1719

Catch The Spirit of The West! Wild Horses & Burros -- In search of Good in Lexington, Virginia

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will conduct a wild horse and burro adoption at the VIRGINIA HORSE CENTER in Lexington on March 12-13. BLM will offer approximately 100 horses and 20 burros from western rangelands for adoption to qualified individuals who will give them good homes. The adoption fee is \$125 per animal. The public is invited to attend both days of the adoption, and the animals can be viewed between 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on the day prior to the adoption. An educational seminar will also be held at 5:00 p.m. Thursday evening, March 11.

The Adopt-A-Horse and Burro Program began in 1973 in order to control the increasing populations of wild horse and burro herds on Federal lands. Prior to the late 1950's, wild horses were preyed upon by "mustangers", people who rounded them up and sold them for slaughter. This practice was outlawed in 1971 when Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. This law protects wild horses and burros from extinction and preserves them as "living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West." Under Federal protection, the wild horse and burro herds increased rapidly since they have no natural predators. The BLM adoption program adopts excess wild horses and burros to approved individuals in order to maintain level populations in the wild.

Adopters are required to provide a covered shelter of at least 12 X 12 feet with an attached corral of at least 20 X 20 feet. The corral must have sturdy fencing made of pole, pipe, or planks and at least 6 feet high (5-feet for burros). In order to transport the animal(s), adopters must have a well constructed horse trailer, preferably a stock trailer, with a covered top and side-swing back gates (drop ramps are not permitted) along with halters and lead ropes. BLM contract crews sort, halter and load the animal(s) onto the adopter's trailer. A two-horse trailer must have the middle partition removed. In addition, a mare and foal or two grown horses will NOT be loaded in a two-horse trailer.

Application forms can be obtained from the BLM Jackson District Office, 411 Briarwood Drive Suite 404, Jackson, MS 39206 at 1-888-274-2133 or (601) 977-5400, or (703) 440-1700. Adopters are encouraged to apply and obtain approval prior to the adoption. For more information and to view some mustangs, you may wish to visit our WEBSITE at www.adoptahorse.blm.gov

A non-refundable adoption fee of \$125 per animal helps recover some of the government's expense for transportation and veterinary care of the animals. Before shipping, every animal gathered by BLM is thoroughly checked by a veterinarian, Coggins tested and vaccinated for various equine disorders.

DIRECTIONS: From I-81 North or South take Exit 191 off I-81 onto I-64 West. Proceed to Exit 55 (first exit, Lexington). Take Exit 55 and go right on Route 11 north one tenth mile to Route 39 West. Go left on Route 39 to Virginia Horse Center entrance, approximately one mile.

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